4 Geijskes--19 G,N-5 (1952) 1954 SR8 Bush Negroes SR8

142
291
302
516
[243]

Fig. 11. Threshing the rice ears on a sack with the feet. -- Tapanahoni, Drietabbetje, June 1952.

[245]
[415]

Fig. 12. The fruits of the pina palm are collected in a basket; a beverage is made from the fruit-pulp. -- Marowijne, Albina, April 1953.

[272]

/146 cont./

243 During the sowing one experiences a great deal of trouble
825 from "stondoifies" (1), which eat up the seed; the maturing ears

1. stondoifies = small pigeons, literally stone pigeons.

are plundered by a species of blackbird, "andokie," grain parakeets or pikoetoes, and the little rice bird, "tie." The loss that is suffered through these birds is frequently considerable. Other pests in the rice are not further known, or mentioned.

Bananas (bâna).

●245 These are always planted, but, in comparison with the cassava, less frequently. One ordinarily sets the plants in the ground somewhat later than the cassava shoots, in order to let them grow at the same time. It also happens that a certain section of a ground is planted exclusively with bananas and bacoven because otherwise these hinder the other crops too much with their shade. After 10-15 months the bunches are ripe.

There are various varieties in use:

granbâna, ripe five months after the appearance of the bunch, fruit long;

oemanbâna, ripe three months after the appearance of the bunch; fruit long;

patamacca-bâna, idem; fruit short and somewhat sour in taste;

doengoe, idem; fruit long; frequently with twin fingers;

kodjakondre, idem; fruit short.

252 The bananas are boiled as "green bananas" or, as ripe bananas, are first boiled and then pounded fine into "tomtom." Ripe bananas are also pounded uncooked, then mixed with cassava flour, and baked into a "koekoe."

/146 cont./

245 Bacoven (bakóeba, bákba).

Planted like the bananas. The growing time varies from 10 to 15 months. The banana-bacove is grown the most. The varieties are indicated with the following names:

bigibakoeba or langa-finga, banana-bacove with long fruit (Gros Michel type); produces the bunch after 10 months and this ripens in five months;

watramama-bakoeba, a kind of congo-bacove originally from French Guiana, short variety, bunch matures in three months;

koboto-bakoeba or soeknoe-finga, small yellow, sweet variety of the size of the apple bacove or smaller (missie-finga); bunch ripens in three months;

indji-bakoeba, short, thick, red variety, sweet in taste, with yellow fruit-flesh; bunch ripens in three months.

[262] The bacoven are only eaten as fresh fruit and are very popu-
[136] lar. /147/ The leaves of bananas and bacoven are sometimes severely eaten by leaf-cutting ants.

244 Tajer (tája).

One finds tajer on all grounds, standing in scattered groups. It is harvested after 8-10 months (August-October), but also continuously thereafter. There are various kinds in use:

agauw, large variety (pomtaja); tubers remain good for a long time; also found in the villages;

244 sjoe, smaller variety with yellowish tuber, tubers remain good for
262 a long time; the leaf is eaten as a vegetable;

dasini, larger variety with yellowish tubers, which is frequently planted because of its tastiness; the harvesting is done in small bits at a time, for the tubers rot quite quickly; the leaf of this too, is used as vegetable; a small variety of dasini is also called chinees taja;

wititaja, smaller variety; tubers remain good for a long time; leaf is also eaten.

252 Tajer tubers are boiled, like potatoes, frequently with fish or meat and oil, into a soup.

/149 cont./

249 pikien keeng, small variety with thin stalks; is not cut with a [789] cutter but broken off by hand; obia (1) is made from it;

1. obia = spirit medicine.

[262] switi-keeng, the ordinary variety which is most used: the stalks [263] are eaten fresh (chewed) or the juice is expressed with the wooden sugar-press (ma) and boiled down to a syrup (lika) which is used [407] in coffee or in crushed awarra (2).

2. awarra = prickly palm which supplies edible fruit.

273 For festivals one cuts the stalks in pieces and allows the juice to be extracted from them in water in a short korjaal (komata). This water is later heated in a pot and fermented into an alcoholic beverage (djojo).

● 245 Pineapple (nanási).

This is regularly grown, the shoots standing scattered on the grounds; after one year the plants produce fruit. Two varieties are distinguished:
bigi nanasi, a white variety;
indji nanasi, likewise a white variety, but sweeter.
[262] The fruit is eaten fresh. Together with sugar cane and bananas, pineapples continue to grow for a long time on the old grounds.

Papaya (papái).

Few papayas stand on the grounds, but many along the edges of the villages, where they grow into long tall trees.
[262] A long red variety is called bobi papai; a short yellow variety,
[252] papai. The fruit is eaten fresh, sometimes also boiled green.

/150/ Tobacco (tabáka).

249 Tobacco is cultivated on a modest scale in various places. The leaves are ripe for picking after 4-5 months (April to May); the man-high plant blooms after seven months with small, pink blossoms.

/150 cont./

249 There is only one variety of tobacco in use, probably the same one that is grown by the upland Indians. The leaves are
276 hung to dry from the rafters in the dwelling huts. For use, the dried leaves are softened in a small tin with water, and the juice that is poured into the palm of the hand is sniffed up and blown out again.

Bŏembie.

249 This is Tephrosia toxicaria, whose roots are used as fish
226 poison. The man-high plants are found standing scattered on the grounds, where they are sowed with the other crops. The plant has hairy leaves and blooms with pink blossoms in clusters.

One uses the dried roots in order to "ponzen" with it between stones in the dry season when the river water is low. This operation consists of crushing the roots into fibers, whereby the poison is released as a milky substance and spreads in the water. In this manner warawara in particular -- in places difficult to reach otherwise -- are captured. According to the Bush Negroes, boembie works better than nekoe (1).

1. nekoe = a liana (Lonchocarpus) which is also used as fish poison.

B. Fruit Trees, Shrubs, and the Other Plants That Are Found in the Bush Negro Villages

241 Aside from the temporary crops that are grown on the grounds, the Bush Negro also uses fruit trees and other perennial crops that
[177] are planted in and along the edge of the villages. Most of them are well-known imported plants; some palm varieties are native. Perhaps these latter were already present on the spot when the village was established, or they more or less accidentally grew up there by the use of the pits. The following varieties are noted.

Coconut (kokonŏto).

● 245 Occurs practically everywhere in the older villages, but is usually sparse because of the constant sweeping of the ground;

/150 cont./

245 [262] [136] in more favorable places it grows fairly well. The production is moderate. The nuts are eaten fresh or, as water nuts, are emptied by drinking. Many trunks exhibit the traces of Castnia daedalus infection (Drietabbetje, Fisiti, Granbori).

Manja (majang).

[262] Grows in all villages into mighty trees and in February-March produces fruit which is especially favored for eating by the youth. Tetémanje and redbreast are the most common varieties. Abandoned villages along the rivers are frequently still typified by the manja trees.

Citrus.

Is represented by lemmetje (lemmeki), sour orange /zure oranje/ (alanja), /151/ orange /sinaasappel/ (pesina), and lemon /citroen/ (soetoen). This order roughly expresses the relative frequency. They are scattered and grow strikingly well in spite of neglect. With a little effort the planting of oranges could be extended. [252] Lemmetjes and sour oranges are frequently used to wash meat and various articles.

Guava (gobai).

[262] Stands scattered and is never lacking; the fruit is eaten especially by the youth.

Soursop (atoekoe).

[262] Occurs here and there; the fruit is eaten fresh.

Breadfruit tree (belebong, brèdebong).

[252] Is found in many villages. It is usually the chestnut-breadfruit, of which only the pips are eaten, roasted or boiled. In Langatabbetje we also saw the ordinary breadfruit.

Koesoewé (koesoewé).

249 Stands in each village, but occurs less frequently than among the Indians. The large pink blossoms and the red fruit contribute

/151 cont./

249 greatly to the beautification of the village. The Bush Negroes use
[232] the red dyestuff from the seeds to smear on the dogs against vermin.

Cotton (katoen).

248 One sees it standing in various places along the edges of the
283 villages and among the dwelling huts. The cotton itself is in ex-
[286] ceptional cases used by the women for spinning. Calf bands (sepoe) are made out of cotton thread after the Indian model, and sometimes hammocks also.

Coffee.

245 Is found here and there in the forest along the edge of the village (Drietabbetje, Poeketti). It is the small variety, probably
[272] Coffea arabica. The beans are used for coffee. The trees probably grew from kernels that at one time were taken by slaves from the plantations.

Calabash (kabasi).

244 Grows everywhere among the dwelling huts and in neglected corners. A distinction is made between kabasi and pikien soepoen.
[415] The wood-like pericarps of both varieties are used for all kinds of purposes, especially for utensils (bowls, spoons) and as "koej" for scooping the korjalen empty.

Kasjoen (kasoeng).

245 Occurs here and there and ordinarily does not supply much
[262] fruit; the latter is eaten fresh, the kernels sometimes roasted
252] like pinda.

Mappa.

Probably a variety of Tabernaemontana (Apocynaceae). Not infrequently in May one sees the women returning from the grounds with pear-shaped /152/ (up to ten centimeters long) yellow fruit,
[262] which they have gathered from a small forest tree. The fruit is eaten fresh; one first taps on the rind with a piece of wood in order to concentrate the milk sap in it, peels the fruit, and the

/15% cont./
245 white cucumber-like fruit flesh is eaten. The taste is refreshingly
262 tart.

249 Ricinus /castor-oil plant/ (karapata).
789 Is to be found in all villages and especially on refuse heaps.
302 The leaf is used for obia, the oil from the kernels as a hair oil.

Pepper (pẽprẽ).
244 Grows as a small shrub near the houses or along the edge of
[252] the village. The variety with small red fruit occurs especially frequently. The fruit is eaten boiled in meat soup.

Koemboe (komoe).
245 Stands in individual specimens in and along the villages and
[252] in the forest. The kernels of this palm are gladly eaten, softened with warm water and pounded into koemboe soup. The fruit is ripe in February-May. A large variety is patawah.

Maripa (maĩpa).
[262] Absent in not a single village. The fruit provides a white,
[252] fatty fruit-flesh that is eaten fresh (May). The pits are dried and pounded to pieces with a stone in order to obtain the three kernels. After having dried these (in the sun), one boils from them a food oil.

Awarra palms (awá).
[263] Stand in little groups in each Bush Negro village. The orange fruit, which is ripe in February-March, sometimes also in June

/152 cont./

245 is eaten fresh, but more frequently pounded in the matta, so
263 that the fruit flesh becomes mushy. Over this one sprinkles sugar or sugar syrup and eats it as a delicacy (awâ-popo).

Pina palm (apodong).

222 In April-May supplies a marble-sized black fruit which is prepared in the manner described for koemboe. This palm variety grows in groups in swampy places in the forests.

Paramaribo, December, 1952.

/The following summary appears in English on pp. 152-153 of the original source./

SUMMARY

AGRICULTURE AS APPLIED BY THE BUSHNEGROES ALONG THE MARONI AND TAPANAHONI RIVERS

241 During the MEDICAL SCIENTIFIC EXPEDITION TO THE SOUTHERN BORDER OF SURINAM from February till July 1952, in order to get an insight into the medical problems of the interior, the opportunity was